



2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

2.1 PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (*California Public Resources Code* [PRC] §§21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, *California Code of Regulations* [CCR], Chapter 3, §§15000 et seq.) require that all State and local agencies consider the environmental considerations of projects over which they have discretionary authority. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is intended to provide decision-makers and the public with information concerning the environmental effects of a proposed project, possible ways to reduce or avoid the possible environmental damage, and the identification of alternatives to a project. An EIR also discloses significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects found not to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects.

The purpose of this Program EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, identify General Plan policies and programs that serve as mitigation, and identify additional mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant effects of the proposed General Plan Update (proposed Project).

The City of Yorba Linda (City) is the “public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the project” and, as such, is the “Lead Agency” for this Project under CEQA (14 CCR § 15367), and is responsible for preparing the Program EIR for the Yorba Linda General Plan Update. This Program EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the rules, regulations and procedures for implementation of CEQA, as adopted by the City of Yorba Linda. The principle CEQA Guidelines sections governing content of this document are Sections 15120 through 15132 (Content of an EIR), and Section 15168 (Program EIR) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

This EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, which states the following:

- (a) *General. A Program EIR is an EIR, which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either:*
 - (1) *Geographically,*
 - (2) *As logical parts of the chain of contemplated actions,*
 - (3) *In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or*
 - (4) *As individual activities carries out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways.*



- (b) *Advantages. Use of a Program EIR can provide the following advantages. The Program EIR can:*
- (1) *Provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action,*
 - (2) *Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis,*
 - (3) *Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations,*
 - (4) *Allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts, and*
 - (5) *Allow reduction in paperwork.*
- (c) *Use with Later Activities. Subsequent activities in the program must be examined in the light of the Program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.*
- (1) *If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the Program EIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a Negative Declaration.*
 - (2) *If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by a Program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.*
 - (3) *An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the Program EIR into subsequent actions in the program.*
 - (4) *Where the subsequent activities involve site-specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operations were covered in the Program EIR.*
 - (5) *A Program EIR will be most helpful in dealing with subsequent activities if it deals with the effects of the program as specifically and comprehensively as possible. With a good and detailed analysis of the program, many subsequent activities could be found to be within the scope of the project described in the Program EIR, and no further environmental documents would be required.*

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15121, the main purpose of this Program EIR is to:

- Provide decision-makers and the public with specific information regarding the environmental effects associated with the proposed Project;
- Identify ways to minimize the significant effects of the Project; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to the Project.



Mitigation measures that are provided that may be adopted as conditions of approval to avoid or minimize the significance of impacts. In addition, this Program EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the proposed General Plan Update.

The City, which has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the Project, and other public (i.e., responsible and trustee) agencies that may use this Program EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this Program EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts are not always mitigatable to a level considered less than significant. In accordance with Section 15093(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. This is termed, per Section 19093(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, a “statement of overriding considerations.”

This Program EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects of the General Plan Update to the degree of specificity appropriate to the current proposed actions, as required by Section 15146 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis considers the activities associated with the Project to determine the short-term and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This Program EIR discusses both the direct and indirect impacts of this Project, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

2.2 APPROACH

State law specifies the basic contents of a General Plan; however, it permits each jurisdiction to use any format deemed appropriate or convenient. General Plans are traditionally organized into required and optional elements. These elements contain a policy component and supporting documentation. The City of Yorba Linda intends for the General Plan Update to be used primarily as a policy document and has elected to include supporting documentation for the General Plan Update in the Program EIR inclusive of the technical appendices.

2.3 EIR SCOPING PROCESS

In compliance with the State CEQA Guidelines, the City has taken steps to maximize opportunities for individuals, parties, and agencies to participate in the environmental process. During the preparation of the Program EIR, various federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties were contacted to solicit comments and inform the public of the proposed Project. This included the distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) on March 8, 2016.

2.3.1 Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Pursuant to the provision of Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City circulated a NOP to public agencies, special districts, and members of the public requesting such notice. The purpose of the NOP was to formally convey that the City is preparing a Program EIR for the Yorba Linda General Plan Update, and that as the Lead Agency, the City was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the Program EIR. The formal comment period began on March 8, 2016 and concluded on April 7, 2016. The NOP and associated comment letters are provided in Appendix A.



2.4 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

The Program EIR is subject to a 45-day public review period by responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties. In accordance with the provision of Section 15085(a) and 15087(a)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City, acting as the Lead Agency will: (1) publish a Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR in a newspaper of general circulation; and (2) prepare and transmit a Notice of Completion (NOC) to the California Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse. Proof of publication is available at the City of Yorba Linda, Planning Division.

Any public agency or members of the public desiring to comment on the Draft Program EIR must submit their comments in writing to the individual identified on the Program EIR's NOC prior to the end of the public review period. Upon the close of the public review period, the City will evaluate and prepare responses to all relevant oral and written comments received from members of the public and public agencies during the review period.

The Final Program EIR will consist of the Draft Program EIR, revisions to the Draft Program EIR, and responses to comments addressing concerns raised by responsible agencies or reviewing parties. After the Final Program EIR is completed and at least 10 days prior to its consideration for certification by the Yorba Linda City Council, a copy of the responses to comments made by public agencies on the Draft Program EIR will be provided to the respective agency.

2.5 INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

The City, as the Lead Agency, will use this Program EIR in consideration of the proposed General Plan Update. This document will provide environmental information to several other agencies affected by the proposed Project or which are likely to have an interest in the Project. Various federal and State agencies exercise control over certain aspects in the General Plan Planning Area which is inclusive of land within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City and the City's Sphere of Influence in unincorporated Orange County). The various public, private, and political agencies and jurisdictions with a particular interest in the proposed General Plan Update Project include, but are not limited to the following:

- California Air Resources Board (CARB);
- California Department of Conservation;
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control;
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans);
- California Emergency Management Agency;
- California Energy Commission;
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA);
- California Office of Emergency Services;
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQB, Santa Ana Region);
- California Reclamation Board (CRB);
- City of Placentia;
- City of Brea;



- City of Anaheim;
- Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District;
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California;
- Local Agency Formation Commission, Orange County (LAFCO)
- Orange County Health Department;
- Orange County Transportation Authority;
- County of Orange County;
- Orange County Water District;
- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD);
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG);
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); and
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

2.6 FORMAT OF THE PROGRAM EIR

Section 1.0, Executive Summary, provides a summary of the General Plan Update, environmental analysis, and alternatives.

Section 2.0, Introduction and Purpose, provides an overview of the Yorba Linda General Plan Update and the scope, use, and approach of the Program EIR.

Section 3.0, Project Description, includes a detailed description of the Yorba Linda General Plan Update. This section describes the environmental setting and defines the Project. Assumptions used during the preparation of this document are also identified.

Section 4.0, Basis of Cumulative Analysis, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative environmental analysis.

Section 5.0, Environmental Analysis, evaluates the impacts associated with implementation of the Yorba Linda General Plan Update. This section is organized according to issue area. Each area includes a description of the regulatory and environmental setting relative to that issue; the environmental effects of the proposed Project; mitigation measures; and determination of significance after mitigation. Mitigation measures that are incorporated into the General Plan Update in the form of strategies and actions are described and additional mitigation measures, which may be required to mitigate impacts, are recommended.

Section 6.0, Alternatives, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project that could avoid or substantially lessen the significant impact of the Project and still feasibly attain the basic Project objectives.

Section 7.0, Growth Inducing Impact of the Proposed Action, discusses the potential growth associated with the proposed action.

Section 8.0, Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Proposed Action is Implemented, describes those impacts that remain significant following mitigation.



Section 9.0, Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would Be Involved if the General Plan Update Was Implemented, describes significant environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action, should it be implemented.

Section 10.0, References, lists the organizations and individuals contacted during the preparation of the Program EIR, report preparation personnel, and a list of reference materials.